(c) the steps taken and being taken to curb and control the menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) to (c) Based on the study by the Indian Council of Medical Research utilising the data of National Sample Survey Organisation, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research etc., the estimated number of deaths every year in India due to tobacco is about 8 lakhs. The year-wise break up of deaths due to tobacco use is not available.

The Committee on Subordinate Legislation (Tenth Lok Sabha) in its 22nd report had made several recommendations primarily intended to discourage the use of tobacco and tobacco products. The Government is examining these recommendations and a draft legislation is under consideration of the Government.

Affairs of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan

*231. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the results of the probe conducted by the Rastogi Committee (1998) set up by the Ministry of probe into the alleged wrongs undertaken by the officers and authorities of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan in the first half of the last decade of 20th century; and

(b) what are the steps taken/contemplated to stop such acts in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan in future?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) The Ministry set up a Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Krishna Gopal Rastogi to inquire into the allegations of administrative and financial irregularities against authorities of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan. The Committee has since submitted its report and the report is being examined by the Government. However, pending action on the report, in the matters of transfer, posting, appointments and admissions, transparent systems are being introduced and it is a continuous process.

Incidences of theft from Railway Bogies during transit

*232. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS

be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the frequent and recurring incidents of theft from Railway bogies during transit;

(b) what steps Government propose to take to stop this;

(c) whether Government propose to make it mandatory to use tamper-free locks in each and every bogie; and

(d) if so, by when, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE):

(a) There is steady improvement in respect of number of cases registered as well as value of property stolen over last two calendar years *i.e.* 1998 and 1999. The details are as under:—

YEAR	NO. OF CASES REGISTERED	VALUE OF PROPERTY STOLEN (In Rupees)
1998	4,401	2,51,47,909
1999	3,595	2,46,25,285

(b) The following preventive measures are being taken to curb such theft:—

1. As far as possible escorting of trains carrying valuable and important consignments.

2. Intensive beat patrolling in yards and other affected areas/ sections.

3. Joint checking at interchange points to take stock of the condition of wagons/seals, carrying consignments.

4. RPF armed pickets are posted/deployed in yards as far as possible.

5. Plain clothed RPF personnel are also deployed to collect criminal intelligence with a view to tracking down offender.

6. Based on criminal intelligence, raids and searches are conducted on the dens of criminals/receivers of stolen property in order to bring

them to book.

7. Close coordination between RPF, GRP and local police is maintained at various levels to apprehend criminals and receivers of stolen property.

8. Dog squads are deployed for patrolling in yards and vulnerable areas as per their availability.

(c) and (d) Consignments are either transported in open wagons or in covered wagons. While damageable consignments loaded in open wagons are required to be secured by tarpaulins, instructions are that Metal tape seal and one-time key-less lock should be used for loading of consignments in covered wagons so that the consignments may reach destination safely.

Electrification/Conversion Projects of Railways

†*233. DR. D. MASTHAN:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of rail projects for electrification, conversion of metre gauge rail lines into broad gauge and laying of new rail lines are under implementation;

(b) if so, the number of each of such projects by the end of December, 1999; and

(c) by when these works are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Number of Railway Projects under implementation at the end of December, 1999 planhead-wise are as follows:—

New Lines —79 (including 5 Metropolitan Transport Projects)

Gauge Conversion (from Metre Gauge to Broad Gauge) — 62 (including 1 Metropolitan Transport Project). In addition there are 8 projects of Gauge Conversion from Narrow to Broad Gauge.

Railway Electrification — 25 (including 3 Metropolitan Transport

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.